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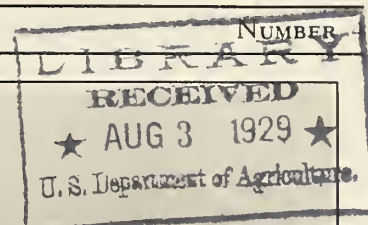
# BETTER PLANTS

*God's first gift to man was a Beautiful Garden*



VOLUME II

JULY—AUGUST, 1924



Year after year Peonies unfold their glories. Each succeeding June seems to bring richer beauty and more abundant blooms until one wonders if there is no end to the delights of a garden of Peonies. Garden of Frederick McClain, Gibsonia, Pa.

## Peonies—The Best of All Hardy Plants

A man once told me he would not give five cents for all the flowers in the United States, and I promptly told him that he was a most singular individual. You will all agree with me that most of us are born with a real love for beautiful flowers, and as we work with them this interest increases and we get more and more pleasure from them. Naturally, we desire "better plants," those giving better flowers, more wonderful colors, covering the whole season of outdoor bloom, plants more easily raised, and so forth.

My love for flowers dates into childhood, as far back as I can remember; and when I started a home of my own, one of our first desires was to fill our spacious yard with many kinds. The rose made a strong appeal, and we had roses and yet more roses, not to mention annuals and some perennials. But about the third year I tired of losing so many roses each winter, and of trying to get anything which would keep ahead of the weeds in another part of the garden. Little realizing what an important step I was taking, I yielded to expert advice and spent ten dollars for peony roots.

Even then, this might not have meant much had I simply set out the roots and left them to their own devices, as I had fully intended. When they came they were all labeled with names about as interesting

Written Expressly for Better Plants  
by Edward Auten, Jr., Princeville, Ills.

to me then as those on the bottles in a druggist's prescription case. But something impelled me to make a planting list, and with Mrs. Auten acting as secretary, the roots were set out according to instructions, and, unknowing, we were safely started on a long journey in Peony Land.

Since then, in order to have flowers all during the year, I have worked with over a hundred kinds of narcissi, with late tulips, about a hundred kinds of iris, with lilies, many varieties of gladioli, with hardy chrysanthemums, as well as roses, annuals and a few perennials. But the time of all times is "Peony Time," and after more than thirteen years' experience with them, my love for beautiful flowers centers unflatteringly there.

Peony time for me starts when the first red shoots come thru the ground. What a pleasure to study each plant, the varieties so different in so many ways beside bloom, and how beautiful in foliage and bud! And when the full burst of bloom comes, how like a blaze of color from a magic world! As I write this in mid-January I am already counting the days until I shall see the second season of bloom on a half-acre diverted from its old task of raising corn,

and now nurturing several thousand peonies in over two hundred varieties.

Here are a hundred and twenty clumps of Therese, that most wonderful of all pink varieties; over a hundred each of Monsieur Martin Cahuzac, Karl Rosenfield and Adolphe Rousseau, dark reds; Mikado, the red and yellow Japanese; forty clumps of Solange, besides hundreds of roots of other choice kinds. And there are varieties of my own—some of them already old friends after eight years of care, others strangers until they give me bloom after four or five years from seed planting, but all adding interest and giving individuality to this half acre.

If you have never seen a good-sized patch of the finest peonies in bloom, you will at first doubt your very eyes. You may have admired the colors of many flowers, the form of others and the fragrance of still others, but here you have all—color, form and fragrance, in a wonderful profusion and variety, and in a nearly perfect color harmony of reds, pinks, whites and a little yellow. And the childish longing for a big flower, still deep in our hearts, is at last satisfied.

There is no magic required to raise these wonderful blooms. People will often turn from their first rapture over the peonies and look me over as if to inquire silently, "Well, what sort of a flower fool or



wonder-worker is this fellow, anyway?" And finally they ask the question direct, only in a more polite way. Whereupon I tell them that it takes only average garden sense to raise peonies—and, also, some enthusiasm—but not any more than thousands of people bestow on automobiles, golf, cards, or a dozen other fads or follies.

The great secret of raising fine peonies is this—*get the finest varieties*. All peonies are easy to grow, but no amount of skill will make a fine one out of a poor one. As they can stay in the same place for even ten years, and as it is not advisable to replant a peony where one has been growing without completely replacing old soil with new, it is especially important to start with the finest varieties.

The following kinds cost from 50 cents to \$1.50 per root, and will never disgrace any collection:

In white, Mme. de Verneville and Baroness Schroeder (both rose fragrant); Duchesse de Nemours, Festiva maxima, Albatre, Mme. Emile Lemoine, Monsieur Du Pont and Marie Lemoine.

In light pinks, Mme. Emile Galle (rose fragrant), Grandiflora, Octavie Demay, Eugenie Verdier and Claire Dubois.

In dark pinks, Edulis superba and Gigantea (both rose fragrant), Monsieur Jules Elie, Modeste Guerin and Livingstone.

In light red, Souvenir de l'Exposition Universelle.

In dark reds, Officinalis rubra, Felix Crousse, Augustin d'Hour and Delachei.

If your expenditure can be larger, select from the following: In whites, Kelway's Glorious (rose fragrant) and Le Cygne. In pinks, Therese, Solange, Tourangelle, La France (this one rose fragrant), Milton Hill, Walter Faxon, Rosa Bonheur, Marie Crousse, Phoebe Cary, Elwood Pleas. In reds, Monsieur Martin Cahuzac, Adolphe Rousseau, Karl Rosenfield, Grover Cleveland, Philippe Rivoire (rose fragrant), Richard Carvel, slightly fragrant, and Longfellow. Laura Dessert is the nearest approach to a yellow herbaceous peony; Primevere is cheaper and almost as good.

These are some of my especial favorites. They are not all of the good varieties by any means, but they will lead one to a full appreciation of the varied form and beauty of the peony. Starting with them, one can later venture as his own fancies lead him thru the long list of old kinds, or try the new ones constantly being offered.

#### MR. MEAD CORRECTS US

"I have just received your interesting booklet BETTER PLANTS. However, in reference to your wonderful Iris Georgia, I note you give the height as 18 inches. This variety grows at least 34 to 36 inches with me and I think your allusion to it as an improved Mrs. Alan Gray is entirely too modest."—FRANKLIN B. MEAD.

#### PHILADELPHUS VIRGINAL

Far excels any other Mock Orange in beauty and form. The blooms are pure white, in clusters of five to seven. The bush is loaded with flowers in May and early June and frequently blooms the second time in the fall. We have a reasonable quantity of plants which we offer for \$2 each, \$15 for 10.



Peonies screening a retaining wall in the garden of F. S. Merrill, Pelham, N. Y.

#### A REMEDY FOR "LEMOINE DISEASE"

Mr. Shaw requested me to let you know how we treated the Lemoine disease.

I knew little about the disease until after the Peony show at Cleveland. You and several of the members were in the garden checking upon varieties and I mentioned that some of my Lemoine varieties were not doing well. You told me to dig a couple of plants, and we found them covered with knots and no growth.

I asked what to do with them. Everyone said burn them, but I did not. I dug them in September and planted them in my hospital ground. This piece of ground was new ground I had cleared and plowed the winter before. It was a yellow clay soil, well drained and never had any manure.

When I received from any source any variety that showed Lemoine disease, I put it in the hospital ground. I dug nine Lemoine diseased varieties which made about 150 plants. I cut off all the knots and also all but one or two eyes on a plant. Then I washed each plant clean and dipped it in common mason lime and sulphur, mixed half and half, and dry. Then I planted them, putting one double handful of leaf mold around each plant; not wet leaves, but soil that you find in the woods where the leaves have collected for years. I use this fine leaf mold for planting all my Peonies—one double handful around each plant. It gives them a start and it makes them easier to dig in our heavy soil.

I am getting off the track of the Lemoine disease. I then finished covering the plants with the common soil. I mulched with straw, kept manure away from the plants. About the middle of May I gave them a good liming, a small handful around each plant, not getting much against the tender stock. The ground was kept well cultivated. About the 10th of August I gave the plants some potash. I used it in the sprinkling can, using a level handful to three gallons of water. I used it in the morning and was careful not to get it on the leaves. I used the potash the same way about the last of August.

The next year they made a fine growth, and during the season I gave them a good coat of wood ashes. I dug the plants the

third fall and very little Lemoine disease showed. I put these plants, with thousands of others, in new ground. They looked very thrifty.

To make a long story short; control the Lemoine disease by cutting away as much disease as possible; do not leave many eyes, and wash them clear and dip the plants in dry lime and sulphur; then plant in a clay loam well drained and never use manure. For fertilizers use lime, wood ashes, bone meal, and a little potash.—FRANK B. GARMAN, North Portage Path, Akron, Ohio.

#### FARR'S SPECIAL PEONY COLLECTIONS

##### Collection A. 1924

A complete range of color for \$6.

7.4 Admiral Togo. Red . . . . .	\$1 50
7.1 Delachei. Red . . . . .	75
7.8 Duc de Wellington. White . . . . .	75
7.6 Edulis Superba. Pink . . . . .	75
7.9 Mary Hollis. White . . . . .	2 00
8.4 Marguerite Gerard. Pink . . . . .	1 50

Complete for \$6. \$7 25

##### Collection B. 1924

It would be difficult to obtain ten better Peonies for \$10. Note the range of color.

8.7 Albatre. White . . . . .	\$1 50
7.8 Augustin d'Hour. Red . . . . .	75
7.6 Charlotte Cushman. Red . . . . .	1 00
8.7 Claire Dubois. Pink . . . . .	1 50
8.1 Duchesse de Nemours. White . . . . .	75
8.4 Felix Crousse. Red . . . . .	1 00
9.3 Festiva Maxima. White . . . . .	75
8.5 Germaine Bigot. Pink . . . . .	1 50
9.2 Monsieur Jules Elie. Pink . . . . .	1 50
8.7 Reine Hortense. Pink . . . . .	2 00

Complete for \$10. \$12 25

Collections A and B for \$15.

#### NIAGARA DUST GUN AT HALF PRICE THIS MONTH

Because of the satisfaction previous purchasers tell us they are getting from the Niagara Dust Gun, we have ordered a large quantity of guns at a special price.

Until August, we will fill orders for this "machine gun" for insect pests at \$2 each; half the price, published in "Better Plants—By Farr." Order card is enclosed for your convenience.



### WORTH KNOWING

Dahlias should be fertilized once a week while the buds are swelling. They are gross feeders.

Constant clipping or spudding on the lawn, and hoeing in the garden, will keep the weeds within bounds.

Mildew may be kept off phlox by sulphide of potassium; one ounce to a gallon of water sprayed over the plants.

Keep the aphid, or plant lice, in check by spraying with tobacco preparations like Black Leaf 40, nicotine, etc.

Iris Lent A. Williamson is incorrectly rated in *Better Plants—By Farr*, 1924 Edition. Correct rating is 9.6 instead of 7.6.

Seed-pods should be removed from shrubs and perennials as fast as the flowers ripen and wilt. This will make stronger plants for next year.

Tulips which were planted out in ripening beds after blooming, should now be lifted, cleaned and packed in shallow boxes until thoroughly dry. Do not expose to the sun.

The Oriental poppy is not dead just because its foliage has dried up and disappeared. Now is the time to transplant; the roots may be cut for propagating purposes.

**RED SPIDER:** This is a tiny mite varying in color from pale greenish yellow to a dark crimson red, usually marked with two dark spots on the back of the body. Red spiders are usually found on the under side of the leaves. These insects suck the juices from the leaves of the plant and often cause great damage. To be controlled they should be dusted with ALL-IN-ONE MIXTURE when they appear in such numbers to warrant an application; care should be taken to treat the under sides of the leaves, bearing in mind that the insects must be killed by contact, and, therefore, must be covered thoroughly in order to be exterminated.

### 1924 Sunrise Collection of Spring-blooming Bulbs

Coax Spring into your 1925 garden with any or all of the attractively low-priced collections here offered. When Spring comes, her path should be lined with daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths. Here is an economical and easy opportunity—

#### 1924 SUNRISE COLLECTION

25 Narcissi, assorted varieties . . .	\$2 00
50 Single Early Tulips, assorted . . .	2 50
50 Darwin Tulips, assorted . . .	2 50
50 Breeder Tulips, assorted . . .	2 50
50 Cottage Tulips, assorted . . .	2 50
20 Hyacinths, assorted . . .	3 50
100 Crocuses, named varieties . . .	2 00

\$17 50

**Complete 1924 Sunrise Collection** (345 bulbs) for only \$15. Any one collection at price indicated. No discount applicable.

If any one or two parts of this collection are not desired, they may be deducted at cost. Example—1924 Sunrise Collection excluding Cottage Tulips would amount to \$15 less \$2.50, or \$12.50.

These Collections will make spring mornings still more beautiful. Their abundance of colorful bloom will be worth many times the cost of the bulbs. Most, if not all, of the bulbs will bloom for many more springtimes.



First-year blooms of Farr's Peonies and Iris. Garden of D. M. Ward, Peabody, Kans.

### HERE'S SOMETHING NEW IN FARR COLLECTIONS

To have Farr Iris better known in every community, and to secure the names of new flower lovers, I want to place some iris in the garden of every person on my mailing list. To make this possible; I am going to give you one of the biggest bargains I have ever offered.

#### Earn 60 cents a minute

For only \$2 and five minutes of your time, I will send you, prepaid, a Surprise Iris Collection worth at least \$5. The collection will contain 10 beautiful named varieties of iris, my selection (no two alike, and which if purchased individually would cost you at least \$5). In the first 25 orders received from each state, I will include an

iris which is now catalogued at \$2.50; sometimes I may slip in a \$5 variety. At any rate, if you are not more than pleased when the package reaches you or when the bulbs bloom, tell me so and your money will be promptly refunded.

Probably you will not need five minutes in which to earn the additional \$3 worth of iris. All you need do is to send us \$2 and the names and addresses of three persons you know who are most likely to buy plants from us, if I send them a copy of my catalog. You can order more than one collection if you furnish three names for every \$2 remitted.

To make it easy for you to order you may use the enclosed return card. Do not overlook the names of your friends, for this is the only compensation I get from this offer. At the price of \$2 the bulbs bring me less than the cost of production. These iris will produce beautiful flowers for years to come if properly cared for; in fact, will greatly increase themselves each year.

### 1924 RAINBOW COLLECTION OF FARR'S IRIS

Here is a collection of my best seedlings which have found places in many catalogs in this country and abroad. They are all rated at 7.0 or better. The collection includes a wide range of color and will be a source of beauty and satisfaction.

	Each
Hiawatha . . . . .	\$0 75
James Boyd . . . . .	50
Mary Garden . . . . .	50
Massasoit . . . . .	50
Mt. Penn . . . . .	1 00
Navajo . . . . .	1 00
Oriental . . . . .	50
Pauline . . . . .	50
Paxatawny . . . . .	50
Pocahontas . . . . .	50
Powhatan . . . . .	50
Quaker Lady . . . . .	50
Red Cloud . . . . .	75
Shrewsbury . . . . .	50
Swatara . . . . .	50
Ute Chief . . . . .	2 00
Windham . . . . .	1 50
Wyomissing . . . . .	50

**One Each** of these 18 varieties, amounting to \$13.25, for \$10. A saving of 24½ per cent. Payment after plants arrive.



Iris, Her Majesty, as a pool border. I. M. G. Brown, Morgantown, W. Va.



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Mississ, Pa.  
ed by  
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Charles E. F. Gersdorff  
1825 N Capitol St.  
Washington D C

A Magazine Devoted to the Hardy Garden  
BETTER PLANTS—JULY-AUGUST, 1924

WERE YOU TOO LATE?  
Last year we were unable to fill many orders for tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, crocuses, and other bulbs. The orders came late in the season, and in most cases varieties were sold out.  
Spring bulbs are imported specially and directly from Holland for October and November planting. All orders should be placed with us before August 1, so that we can order intelligently and economically from Holland.  
Send for a copy of our Holland Bulb Catalog now, and place your order at once. Then you will not be "too late" for complete acceptance of your order. Ask for "Better Bulbs—By Farr."  
All the pictures in this issue are of customers' gardens. Aren't they worth while? We want more and will give an iris worth \$2.50 for one good picture, or a \$5 iris for three or more pictures that we can use.  
**BERTRAND H. FARR—**  
**Wyomissing Nurseries Co.**  
1250 Garfield Avenue  
WYOMISSING, PENNA.

## BETTER PLANTS

### THE AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY —ITS PURPOSE AND AIM

Someone, with a fluent pen, has written, "This Society was organized in 1903 to increase public interest in the Peony, by establishing a standard nomenclature, by disseminating information in regard to its cultivation, by commending varieties of merit, by encouraging the production of new varieties of real quality, by organizing exhibitions and offering prizes for worthy exhibits, and by publishing bulletins of great interest to those to appreciate this wonderful and beautiful flower."

Let us look more closely at these purposes. I think that it would be safe to say that where there was one peony lover in 1903, there are now fifteen—basing this on the growth of the membership of the Society. This increase has been made because every member is enthusiastic about the peony, and wants others to share his joy.

When the Society was founded the nomenclature of the peony was in a deplorable state. Many varieties had been renamed, both through ignorance, and, I am sorry to say, through avarice. To make a "bull"—the only variety you could be sure of getting was *Festiva maxima*, and sometimes you could not be sure of that. In cooperation with a department of Cornell University, test gardens were planted with donations from growers all over this country and Europe. Accurate descriptions were made of a great many varieties, and today these descriptions are accepted the world over as the most reliable, and make it possible for the amateur as well as the expert to authenticate the names of his peonies.



*Iris pallida dalmatica* in the Merrill garden

New varieties have been introduced in recent years which have not been described, but the Society is planning for a new bulletin containing descriptions of such varieties. There will be other varieties to come, and then to describe them from time to time.

A list of all varieties known to be in cultivation was sent to the members all over the country, each member being asked to rate them on their comparative merit, using 10 for perfection. These ratings have made it possible for us to gain an idea of the intrinsic value of each variety. Perhaps a variety is high priced because there are few plants in existence, but this does not necessarily make it one of the best, and if you want only a few of the choicest you may select varieties which rate above 8.5 or 9.0, and feel sure that

you have made no mistake. In addition to this all the varieties rating below 6.0 have been discarded. A new rating on the very latest will be made soon, and if you are a member you will receive the bulletin containing this.

The annual shows are more and more interesting every year, and have been held from Boston to Minneapolis. We expect this year's show at Des Moines to be the biggest ever.

Now we want you for a member because your interest will be increased, and the peony will be better known and loved by you and your friends. We want your help in spreading the gospel of beauty of the peony, so that every home may have a garden of joy.—WINTHROP H. THURLLOW.

### MASTERPIECE COLLECTION FARR'S NEW IRISES

When you know Irises as "June companions" they reveal their delicate, ethereal loveliness, and lead you into a wonderland of delight. Wouldn't you like to adopt them as a "hobby," just as I did many years ago?

	Each
Cecile Minturn	\$5 00
Sea Gull	3 00
Seminole	2 50
Japanesque	3 00

Complete set (amounting to \$13.50)  
for \$12.00

DR. W. E. UPJOHN, Treasurer  
American Peony Society, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Dear Sir: I wish to apply for membership in the American Peony Society and enclose \$3 for my dues for the first year. This will include all the bulletins published this year.  
(If the bulletins previously issued are desired, enclose \$2 more.)

Name.....

Address.....

Recommended by B. H. Farr.